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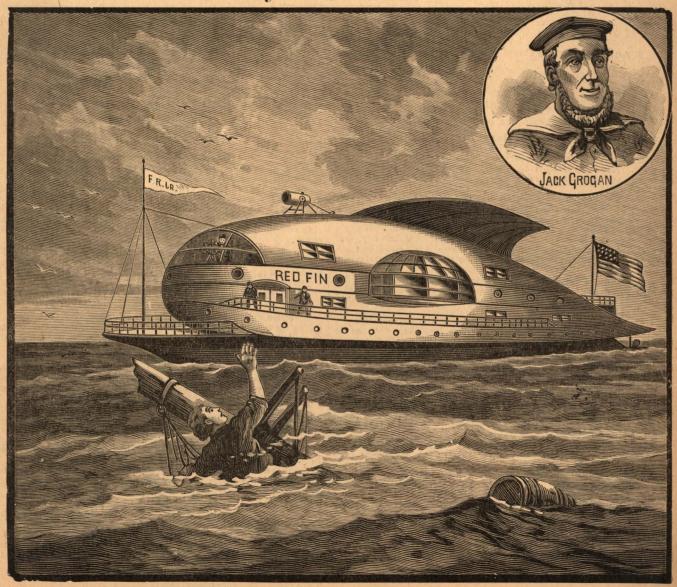
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THE CORAL LABYRINTH;

or, Lost With Frank Reade, Jr., in a Deep Sea Cave.

By "NONAME."



As the Fin ran alongside, the castaway was seen to be a young and strikingly handsome fellow. He was half naked and was clinging to the crow's nest of a ship's mast. "Ahoy!" shouted Frank. "Do you want a line?"

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The Coral Labyrinth;

Lost With Frank Reade, Jr., in a Deep Sea Cave.

THE STORY OF A SUBMARINE VOYAGE.

By "NONAME,"

Author of "The Coral Labyrinth," "Over Two Continents," "Across the Desert of Fire," etc., etc., etc.

CHAPTER I.

WHICH INTRODUCES OUR CHARACTERS.

"There's many a wonderful thing under the sea, mates," declared old Jack Grogan, as he gave his duck trousers a hitch, "and if I was going to take a cruise down there, I'd make a hitch for the South Pacific. It ain't so infernal deep as ther other oceans, an' the water is clear, an' agin there are more wonderful things to be found

With which the old sailor ejected his quid of tobacco, and seating

himself upon an empty box continued:

"I've been on twenty-eight cruises on all oceans, and in every kind of a craft, from a Malay proa to a ship of the line, an' I kin tell you a sailor's life ain't all poetry. I was with Farragut at Mobile Bay, too. Yet I hanker fer one more voyage. I don't care if it's under ther sea this time. I'm willin' to sign my papers fer thet kind of a cruise any time."

"Begorra, I'm shure ye're jist the man Misther Frank wants," declared Barney O'Shea, knocking the ashes out of his dudeen and giving his shock of red hair a shake. "Shure, if it's to yer moind, Jack, I'll spake that same to him fer yez!"

"Do it, mate, an' I'll make it up to ye," cried Grogan, eagerly.

"Golly, I done heerd dat Marse Frank am gwine to start on de deep sea cruise right away!" declared Pomp, a diminutive but comical darky, "de submarine boat am all ready."

"Blow me fer a lubber!" cried Grogan, "let him name the day and I'll have my kit aboard and all tidy. Jack Grogan never failed his skipper yet."

This trio of quaint characters were at the moment congregated in one corner of the yard of the great machine works at Readestown. These works were the property of Frank Reade, Jr., the famous

young inventor, of whom everybody has heard, and whose inventions

have long since made his fame and fortune.

Barney and Pomp, the Irishman and the negro, were old friends and servants of his. Wherever Frank traveled the world over they were sure to accompany him.

Jack Grogan was a retired seaman, and a genuine character in his way. He was fond of lounging about the works, and was one of Frank Reade, Jr.'s most leal and devoted friends.

The old tar had been deeply interested in Frank Reade, Jr.'s latest wonder, the new submarine boat.

The "Red Fin," as the new boat was called, was a marvel of the

inventor's genius.

The sight of the boat had revived in the old salt's breast a desire to take one more cruise, and this time under the sea.

In fact, he could think, dream, nor talk of aught else but the proj-

But he lacked the courage to broach the matter to Frank, and therefore, as we have seen, was enlisting Barney and Pomp in his be-

Both were fond of the old sailor and eager to speak a good word for

him. They felt sure that Frank would not refuse him.

The Red Fin at that moment floated in the waters of a deep tank or basin in the inner yard. This tank was very deep, and covered a quarter of an acre in extent.

It was connected with a canal and a series of locks which led down to the river. From thence it was easy to journey to the sea. In designing his submarine boat Frank had taken the dolphin as a

The hull was of steel—strong and water tight. The main shell of the boat rested upon this, and was in shape much like a huge fish, being large in the bow and tapering off to a point at the stern.

The lower hull or that part below the main deck contained the elec-

tric machinery and dynamos, for the boat's imotive power was electric-

Here also was the tank or reservoir for the purpose of sinking or lifting the boat. This was accomplished by admitting water enough to send the craft under the surface, or forcing it out by pneumatic pressure to raise it to the surface.

A line of deadeye windows extended here from stem to stern, so

that light was admitted easily when the boat was on the surface.

The main deck was nearly all occupied by the shell or fish-shaped structure in which were the cabins of the craft. A narrow platform with a guard rail extended fore and aft upon both sides.

with a guard rail extended fore and aft upon both sides.

The front end of the shell contained the pilot house, which was provided with powerful thick glass windows. Over this pilot house there was placed a search-light of tremendous power.

Amidships in the shell on each side, port and starboard, were two huge observation windows. While the boat was under water, those in the cabin could thus be constantly in view of the sea depths.

Upon the roof of the shell or cabin, there was a buge movable steel fin, calculated to steady the boat while taking a submarine plunge. This was painted a brilliant crimson, and to this the craft owed its name. name.

Next to the pilot house was a door and vestibule which could be hermetically sealed.

While under water, air was furnished the voyagers by means of pipes and tubes placed about the walls of the cabin, which constanty disseminated pure oxygen from a chemical generator placed in the dynamo room. This invention possessed the double power of destroy-

ing poisonous gases and manufacturing and circulating fresh oxygen. So that those on board the Red Fin were sure to be furnished with air fully as good as that upon the surface, no matter how deep they might go under the sea.

Every obstacle to safe and successful submarine navigation Frank had met and mastered.

The interior of the Red Fin contained cabins, staterooms, engine

room, storerooms, galley for cooking and other necessary compartments. These were all elegantly furnished and fully equipped.

The Red Fin's stores had even been placed aboard and she was ready for a long voyage. But up to this moment Frank had been

somewhat in a quandary as to where he should go.

To be sure the oceans of the world afforded no lack of field, but to decide upon these was the problem.
a long trip under Arctic frozen seas. Once he had thought of

But an incident occurred which finally decided him. One day Barney came diffidently into the draughting room, and

"If yez please, sor, there's a gintleman has sent in his card." "Eh?" exclaimed Frank; "I am very busy just now. Is the fellow of any importance, Barney?"

The Celt stammered and scraped and bowed, and finally managed

to articulate:

"Well, sor, I think I'd see him an' have a talk wid him."

Frank took the card.

This was the inscription on it:

" MISTER JAKK GROWGAN, "Hees X mark,

Frank smiled broadly.

"Why, it's Grogan!" he exclaimed. "What the mischief is all this nonsense? Why didn't he come without the formality of a card?"

"Well, sor," stammered Barney, "he's that anxious to see yez that he thought yez wud see him the quicker fer that."

Frank saw the logic of this ruse at once, and could not help a laugh.

He laid down his pen, and said:
"Why, of course, I'll see him. Send him right in, Barney!"

The Celt disappeared, and it hardly seemed a moment when the old sailor himself appeared on the threshold.

He shambled into the room in a diffident manner, but Frank quickly

put him at ease, by saying:
"Sit down, Grogan. I am glad to see you. What can I do for you?

The tar hitched at his trousers, and then sank into a chair on the

opposite side of the table.

"Begging your pardon, skipper, for bein' so free and easy," said Grogan in his blunt way, "but there's no half way about old Jack, and I'll tell ye right out what I've come for. I want to sign articles to go with ye on yer new cruise under water. I'll chalk my name down right here, an' wait orders if ye say so."

Frank could not have been more astonished. Indeed, for a few mo-

ments he was at a loss what to say.

But in that short space of time he read the heart of the old sailor.

He saw that this was Grogan's bluff way of making known the dearest desire of his heart.

He had never entertained a thought of taking Grogan with him. Indeed, he was disposed on the instant to regard it as hardly feasi-

But in that moment he saw the effect a refusal would have upon the

faithful old fellow, and his warm heart was near melting.
"Well," he said after an interval. "You have quite taken me by surprise, Grogan. Have you fully considered what such an undertaking means for a man of your age?"

The old tar touched his cap.

"I've decided to make one more v'yage, cap'en!" he said. "And it's with you I want to ship!"

Frank pretended to fuss with some papers while he tried to decide

the question upon its merits. Then it occurred to him that Grogan could make himself very handy about the boat.

This settled it.

He held out his hand.

"Give me your hand, Jack," he said, "there's no need of signing any papers. My word is my bond."
"Then ye'll take me?" asked Jack, eagerly.
"Yes!"

"Hang me fer a harpooner!" said the old salt, heartily. "Ye'll not have cause to be sorry.'

And the prediction was verified as Frank had after-cause to recall.

CHAPTER II.

BOUND FOR THE PACIFIC.

Or course Barney and Pomp were delighted when they learned the truth from the old sailor's lips.
"Arrah, I knew it well!" said Barney. "Shure Misther Frank wud

niver refuse the loikes av yez!"

"Golly! maybe yo' won't keer so much 'bout goin' when yo' hab been undah watah a lilly while," ventured Pomp.
"Blow me hard!" cried Jack, "I never croaked on my 'davy yet, an' I'll stand by it till Davy Jones calls me into his locker."

Frank had set Thursday for the day of sailing.

He had finally decided upon his point of destination. In this he had been influenced by old Jack.

To the Pacific they were to go.

This meant a long cruise around Cape Horn. But this could be safely made, for the Red Fin was an extremely seaworthy and stanch

When Thursday morning came a large crowd lined the river banks to see the boat start.

All preparations had been carefully made. Frank had left his machine shops in charge of a trusty foreman.

Then the voyagers went on board the Red Fin.

The machinery was started, the canal gate opened and the boat glided out into the lock. In a few moments she was in the lower level and started for the river.

Into the larger stream she finally glided. Then cannons fired, bands played, and there was a great demonstration on shore.

Frank responded to the salute and then the Red Fin disappeared around bend in the river and the voyage to the sea was begun.
While in the river of course it was not feasible to travel under

water.

And indeed Frank had no idea of traveling in such a manner until the Pacific was reached. The Red Fin could of course travel faster on the surface and it was desired to reach the grounds of explorations as soon as possible.

Under the wonderful Pacific Frank reckoned upon an interesting ip. He could readily imagine what wonders must there exist. Old Jack Grogan was right in his element. The Red Fin was an

object of his deepest admiration.

"She's as steady as a clock and as fit as a sixpence," he declared.
"I'd go the world over in her."

Barney and Pomp were in such high feather that they fell to sky-larking. While they were the warmest of friends, nothing suited either better than a chance to nag the other.

It came about through a discussion of a rather strong story told by Barney of an event which happened in Ireland before he came to America.

"Shure I was going down to Ballyknock Fair," he declared, "an' I had to cross Fally-baugh Bridge on the way. Shure that's where ould Tim Heely wrestled wid the divil on a dark noight an' fell over into the dark wather an' wint straight to Purgatory. It was a dark noight whin I cum to it too, an' I kapt me eyes open fer the same divil, an' be me troth, as I was a-lukin', along came a little man in red and green, and eyes looke force.

divil, an' be me troth, as I was a-lukin', along came a little man in red and green, and eyes loike foire.

"Shure, I shook so in me boots that the stitches fell out, an' I was afther losin' thim, whin I looked, an' be jabers, phwere there was one av the little min, bad cess to me, there was two! Thin I knew they was fairies, an' I reached fer me bottle of howly wather to skeer thim away, whin—whist!—away they flew into the black wather. 'Whurroo! it's to the divil they've gone to tell him I'm here,' I sez to mesilf, an' thin I wint over the bridge in wan leap, an' in two more I was ferninst the Ballyhoo turnpike, whin—tare an' ounds!—there sthood the ghost of poor Tim Heely! 'Shure, it's back I've cum to warn ye, Barney,' he sed. 'Luk out fer the little min in grane an' red. Kape yure eyes open.' 'Shure, there's no nade to tell me that,' I cried, 'but I'll niver stay here to kape me eyes on thim, bad luck to thim!' and I stharted fer home, whin—"

"Hol' on dar, chile," interrupted Pomp, stuffing his fingers into his ears. "Does you 'spees me to believe any sich fing as all dat?"

"Yez don't mean to say I'd tell yez a lie?" spluttered Barney, rolling up his sleeves.

ing up his sleeves.
"Huh! Yo' mus' hab been takin' somefic' dat night; mus' hab had de lerium tremenjus, or somefin' like. Wha' yo' puttin' up yo' sleeves

fo', sah?"
"Yez have insulted me! Niver doubt the worrud av an O'Shea!"
"Wha' yo' gwine to do about it?" sniffed Pomp, shaking his head

"I'll show yez!"
"Don't yo' fool wif dis mule," adjured Pomp. "Yo' might git hurted."

"Yez are jest the koind of a chap I'm afther," said Barney, with ach bombast. "Luk out fer ye'silf."
With which he made a dash at the coon, but Pomp dodged under much bombast.

his arm and tripped the Celt up. But in falling Barney caught Pomp around the waist.

Down they came in a heap, and the wrestle which followed was indeed a lively one. It was an even thing, however, and the two jokers kept at it until, so completely exhausted, that all they could do was to sit on the floor of the cabin and glare at each other.

All this while the wheel of the submarine boat had been lashed to hold the vessel on a southeasterly course. It was customary for Barney to do this whenever he wished to absent himself from the pilot house for a short while. house for a short while.

Running on this course in the open sea seemed safe enough, an obstacle suddenly loomed up in the path of the Red Fin.

It was not a submerged reef, for land was nowhere in sight.

black object lay just barely visible above the surface and right in the path of the boat.

It chanced that Jack Grogan lounged into the pilot house at that

Frank was in his cabin studying some charts.

"Hello!" exclaimed the old tar; "where's the wheelsman! Boat running to windward—helm lashed—no land in sight. Reckon I'll take the trick until he comes back."

With which Jack cast off the lashing and seized the spokes of the wheel.

He glanced over the bow of the boat which was skimming along at a lively rate, and the next moment his face turned chalky white, and he yelled at the top of his lungs:
"Rocks ahead! Port your helm!"
Then he jammed the wheel over. But it was too late.

The long ram of the Red Fin struck the obstruction. For a moment

it seemed as if she was going to smash.

The shock threw all upon their faces and dashed portable articles in all directions. Frank, as soon as he gained his feet, started for the

As for Jack Grogan, he had clung to the wheel.

He had presence of mind enough to throw back the lever which stopped the engines. Then what followed was to him most confused

He had been sure that the black object struck by the Red Fin was the overturned hull of a derelict vessel. He saw the water foam and boil tremendously, the huge black form rushed furiously forward, and then-

Darkness!

The submarine boat was dragged under the water. In that swift instant Grogan believed that the derelict was sinking and dragging the Fin down with it.

At this moment Frank Reade, Jr., had groped his way into the pilot house.

"Barney!" he cried, "what on earth is the matter? Why are we sinking? What has happened?"

"Begorra, Misther Frank, divil a bit do I know!" wailed the Celt,

who was beind Frank.

"Golly, I reckon we'se been runned into!" cried Pomp.

"Easy, mates." roared Jack Grogan; "ti's neither one nor the otherwise and the state of the state er. It's ourselves have run into a derelict, an' I'm not a fool. carrying us down to the bottom."

It was lucky for the submarine voyagers at that moment that the doors and windows were all hermetically sealed. The cabin would surely have been flooded else.

Frank managed to reach the keyboard and turned on the electric

lights. This gave a better understanding of the disaster.

The Fin was rocking and pitching violently. Frank turned the search-light upon the object on the boat's ram.

Then he gave a great shout.

"Why, it's a whale!" he cried.

"A big sperm whale!"

"A whale!" gasped Grogan.

"Sure! We have run the boat's ram into its carcass and it is towing us under water."

This was the truth; the supposed derelict had proved to be a whale

lying on the surface as they are sometimes wont to do.

The stem of the boat seemed immovably fixed in the whale's body.

There was nothing to do but trust to good fortune in getting the best

And this it was soon seen was inevitable. The whale was momen-

tarily growing weaker.

In less than a dozen minutes of the struggle the cetacean gave up the fight. Its huge flukes ceased their wild play, and it passively floated to the surface carrying the Fin with it.

There boat and whale floated for some while before a plan of action

could be decided on.

Reversing the engines was ineffectually tried. It did not succeed.
"There is but one way," said Frank. "We must go out and cut away the whale's blubber."

"Right ye are, skipper," cried Grogan, "and I'm with ye. Got a

good spade?"

The requisite tools were not carried aboard the Fin, but some axes

and saws were found, and with these work was begun.

As the huge pieces of blubber were cut out and cast into the sea,

Grogan said:

"What a chance this would be fer a New Bedford whaler now?

There's many good gallons of oil in this criter, mates. But as we've no use for it we'll give it to ther sharks."

CHAPTER III.

THE MYSTERIOUS SCHOONER.

STEADILY they cut their way into the whale's carcass. It was found that the point of the ram had caught between the monster's ribs.

As soon as this was sawed away the Fin backed away from the whale and was clear once more. No damage had been done to

This was a matter of congratulation for all.

Barney took up his station at the wheel again, and this time kept a

It put an end to skylarking for a while, and for some days matters were quite monotonous on board the Fin.

Day by day the submarine boat drew nearer the Equator. The air became insufferably close and sultry, and the sun hung in a brazen sky.

One day Frank said:
"We are one hundred miles east of Cape San Roque and five degrees below the Equator. The barometer indicates a disturbance of

some kind. Keep an eye'on the horizon, Barney."

"All right, sor!"

"That is correct, skipper," said old Jack in confirmation. "You can well look out for a bad storm in these ere waters. They're no common hurricanes, make sure!"

Scorcely half an hour had passed when Barney sent a warning cry through the cabin.
"Shure, Misther Frank, I belave that storm is afther comin'. The

sky luks very funny and quare." Frank stepped into the pilot house and a glance told him the truth.

Along the horizon there was a heavy yellowish cloud which blended up to the zenith with the copper colored sky.

"A storm!" he ejaculated. "Whew! what do you think of it,

Grogan gave a quick glance at the horizon and shrugged his shoul-

ders. "It'll be more than a storm!" he declared, "it's a regular hurri-

cane. We'd better lay by close hauled until after it passes."
"It will not affect us much," said Frank, "save perhaps to delay us just a trifle for we can go under the surface and avoid it all."
"That's so, skipper," cried Jack, "the storm on the surface never troubles the deep water."
"Will be affective about the text learned to the surface never the surface and avoid it all."

"Will I be afther sindin' the boat down thin, sor?" cried Barney.
"No!" replied Frank, "let me take the wheel, Barney. I have a curiosity to see the approach of this storm and to see how the Fin would work in a bit of wind."

"There's no better way to find out, sir," said Grogan, eagerly, "but I'm sure she'd ride it out like a bird. But this is no ordinary storm I make free to say. It will send many a good ship to the bottom."

"Yonder is a sail," said Frank, "she looks like a ship of the line."

"A Yankee brig I'll take my davy," cried Jack. "Ye can tell that

by the way she stands up. But it's time they pulled in their main and mizzen sails."

'I should think so!" agreed Frank. "Can it be that they realize

their danger.

"I should say not, skipper."

"Ought we not to warn them?"
"As ye like, sir."
The idea grew upon Frank. Certainly if the crew of the distant schooner did not appreciate their peril then they ought to be warned

of it.
"I almost believe it's my duty," muttered the young inventor;

"how far off is she, Jack?"
"I should say five miles or under, sir," replied the old sailor, measuring the distance with his eye.

uring the distance with his eye.

"And how far off is the storm!"

"About forty or fifty minutes I would make it."

"Then there is time enough," cried Frank; "these Equatorial hurricanes strike swiftly and are soon spent, are they not, Jack?"

"You are right, sir."

"That settles it," cried Frank, "about ship and let us warn those fools. They will certainly go to the bottom if they don't take in sail." fools.

Away sped the submarine boat toward the schooner. She stood up

like a church steeple in her full complement of sails.

The crew of the Fin were intensely interested. They watched the schooner with the best glasses on board.

But though the hurricane was gathering force, not a sail on the schooner's masts was touched. She seemed to flaunt defiance to the

god of storms.
"Great Scott!" exclaimed Frank, while a cold sweat broke out upon him, "they positively cannot realize their danger. They really

what hardly time now to reef all that canvas."

"They're a pack of fools," growled Grogan. "Or else—hey!

What's the meaning of that, mates?"

Suddenly, and as if by magic, the strange schooner disappeared.

Swept from sight in the twinkling of an eye.

Astounded, the voyagers gazed at the spot where she had been and then at each other. "What the deuce-

"What the deuce——" began Frank.
"Begorra, she's afther sinkin'," cried Barney.
"G'long, yo' foolish fing!" scoffed Pomp. "She jes' cudn't go down so quick as all dat."

"Maybe yez kin tell where she did go thin," said Barney, with sarcasm.

"I jes' reckon we didn't see no ship 'tall," declared Pomp sagely.
"We only jes' fought we did."
"Be me sowl, it's crazy yez are," said Barney angrily. "Can't I believe me own two eyes."

But Frank and Grogan were busy scanning the sea where the schooner had been last seen. So when they turned a point to the eastward a startling sight met their gaze.

There was the schooner, just as tall and as full of sail as ever. But

she had in the twickling of an eve changed her position fully half a

mile.
"Well, I'm blowed!" ejaculated Grogan; "how did she get over

there? Are we crooked in our eyes?"
"On my word," said Frank, "it is very queer. It must have been an optical delusion. But the storm is coming. Why don't they take

Frank put on more speed and sent the Fin ahead.

But though miles were covered, the brig kept just as far away. She

was not gained on in the least.
"Well, I'll be hanged!" cried Jack Grogan. "She must be a fast
"Well, I'll be hanged!" cried Jack Grogan. "She must be a fast sailer to give us such a song and dance. and wait for us?"
"Exactly," agreed Frank, "but have you noticed one fact, Jack?"
"What is that?"

"Well, in the first place, we have been chasing her long enough to have come up with her, but we are no nearer than ever."

The sailor's eyes bulged.
"Great whalebones," he ejaculated, "you're right, skipper!"

Then the old salt regarded the distant vessel for some time with great intentness. It was true that the submarine boat did not gain upon her a particle. What was more, everything about the distant vessel was most peculiar, in fact unreal.

Superstition is always a component part of every sailor's nature.

Jack Grogan was no exception.

After a time he walked over to Frank, and in a mysterious way,

said:
"I reckon, skipper, we'd better lay a new tack."
"What?" exclaimed Frank. "Give up the chase?"

"Well," said Frank, in surprise; "I don't feel like doing that. What are your reasons for such a move?"

"She's no craft we can ever overhaul," said Grogan, positively, "there's many a poor skipper has been led into a death trap by that ship. I make sure she's like the Flying Dutchman."

Frank saw the point. He read the sailor's mind at once and could

hardly restrain a laugh.

"Pshaw!" he said, "that is all nonsense, Jack. If that schooner is not a reality it is not of ghostly character, be sure. At least we'll find out what she's made of!"

The words had barely left Frank's lips, when a distant dull booming

was heard.

The hurricane was coming.

And yet the schooner had not taken a reef. If the gale should strike her, what would save her?

Surely no earthly power.
"Heavens!" exclaimed Frank, "what can her crew be thinking

of? Are they insane?"

Barney put on fresh speed, but at that moment a solution of the

whole mystery transpired.

Suddenly all were astounded to see the schooner rise apparently from the sea. She darted up into the sky. She was visible in a distant, faint mist some points above the horizon. Then she vanished.

"Great gunwales!" ejaculated Jack, with chattering teeth; "what

"Yes," said Frank, with a deep breath of relief, "I can see and understand it all now. She is no kin of the Flying Dutchman. It was only a very vivid and wonderful mirage."

Such indeed it was.

Frank knew that the schooner was many miles away from that endangered locality.

At no point is the phenomena of the mirage more common or more

distinct than in Equatorial seas.

He was relieved that it was after all but an optical delusion. the schooner been in reality overtaken by the hurricane he would in-deed have felt bad. But he doubted not that she was in distant waters, and out of the path of the tempest.

But now that the mirage had disappeared, the attention of all was

claimed by the oncoming storm.

The sky was overcast with an ominous yellow haze. It was almost utter darkness on the face of the sea.

The distant bellowing of the storm could be plainly heard. It was sweeping everything before it in its path. Suddenly Jack Grogan cried:

"Here she comes, mates! Stand by for lashings!"

The sight now beheld by all was most ominous. A great wall of white was rushing across the sea. In a few moments it would have reached the spot where the Red Fin was.

Had the submarine boat attempted to meet the shock of a collision

with that terrific tidal wave, it might have suffered serious injury. But this was by no means necessary, and Frank did not intend to risk it.

CHAPTER IV.

THE CASTAWAY.

THE young inventor knew that the Red Fin was undoubtedly capable of outriding the storm.

She was stanch and impervious to a possible leak. But her machinery was delicate, and would be subjected to severe tension.

Besides the voyagers themselves would have nothing whatever to

gain from such an experience. So Frank decided to avoid the contest.

Accordingly he stepped into the pilot-house and touched an electric button. In an instant every door and window on board the Fin was securely and hermetically sealed.

Then he touched another button.

In a twinkling the various electric lights of the wonderful craft were ablaze. Lastly he turned the switch which opened the big tank be-

Instantly it filled and the boat settled beneath the surface. Down she sank.

The storm and its terrors was beyond sight, sound, or effect. Down

into a new world the voyagers went.

This was the deep sea world, and a marvelous one it was, too.

The bottom suddenly came into view, and Frank consulted the

gauge and calmly said:

"We are a mile from the surface."

Think of it, dear reader! One mile of sea water over one's head!

All that mighty volume that considerable distance between one and daylight, the air, the upper world, where God's creatures enjoyed the blessings of a marvelous existence.

It was a stupendous thing to think of. But yet our voyagers gave

it little heed.

They were almost instantly interested in the deep sea life which was all about them.

They had settled down upon a coral strewn bank of whitest sand. On one hand was a mighty forest of marine growth. On the other was a desert of sand.

And in the marine forest there lurked all kinds of queer creatures eager to entice victims from the outer sea into their maws. All manner of curious fish of various colors swam in the open waters. In the sands were hundreds of species of shellfish.

"There's a ship's cable," cried Jack, pointing to a huge coil half

buried in the sand.

But when the cable suddenly became lively and resolved itself into

a monster eel and swam away the sailor was astounded.

Barney and Pomp were also immensely interested in the sights about them.

One could sit in the main cabin and through the great observation windows on either hand he could witness many wonderful sights.

At times huge fish came up to the glass and tried to enter, striking their noses with much force. But they were always baffled.

Frank had allowed the boat to rest in the sand, and as he looked

at the chronometer said:

"We will stay here thirty-five minutes. The typhoon ought to be

over by that time hadn't it, Jack!"
"It will never last longer, sir," replied the old salt; "those storms come quickly and are soon over."

But the minutes sped by so swiftly, and there was so much to study in the translucent depths, that an hour had passed before the return to the surface was made.

Then the voyagers found the sea smooth, the sky clear, and the sun shining brightly once more. The hurricane had passed.

Far off in the east, a dull line of yellow was all that remained visi-

ble of it. A light breeze rippled the sea, and once more the course of the Fin

was set to the southward. The course was now direct to Cape Horn waters. Thence into the Pacific.

But the storm had not passed without bringing its exciting incident.

Suddenly Barney, who was at the wheel, cried:
"Begorra, Misther Frank, there's a man out yender, clingin' to a

floating bit av wreck, sor!"

"What?" cried Frank with sudden interest rushing into the pilot house. "Where is he, Barney?"

"Squint yer eye out that way, sor."

But Frank saw that the Celt was right. About a quarter of a mile distant a dark mass floated on the heaving waves.

As it rose at regular intervals out of the trough of the sea, a man could be seen clinging to it. What was more, he was waving his hands to attract attention.

"Great whales" exclaimed Jack Grogan, "it's a castaway, mates."
"Right enough!" cried Frank. "Run down to pick him up, Barney. Come on, Jack! Get a line from the hold and we'll try and get him aboard."

" Aye, aye, sor!" replied the old salt.

Barney headed the Fin for the floating mass of wreckage. It took but a few moments to cover the distance.

As the Fin ran alongside, the castaway was seen to be a young and strikingly handsome fellow. He was half naked and was clinging to the crow's nest of a ship's mast.

"Ahoy!" shouted Frank. "Do you want a line?"
"Well, I should say so," replied the castaway, spiritedly. "I'm willing to leave this position, to be sure. Will you take me aboard?" "Why, of course," replied Frank. "Do you think we could be so heartless as to leave you out there to die? Has your ship gone

down?" " Ay, and with all on board."

"Stand ready for the line then!"
"Ay, sir!"
Jack Grogan made a skillful heave of the line, and it was caught by the castaway.

A few moments later he was on board the Red Fin.

He was not a seafaring man, as could readily be seen. He was extremely young, but there was a manly air about him and the stamp of self reliance in his handsome face which won friends for him instantly.

His first action upon gaining the Fin's deck was to look about

him and exclaim in astonishment,

"Well, I'm beat? What kind of a craft is this-a government torpedo boat or a new kind of cruiser?"

pedo boat or a new kind of cruiser?"

"Wrong, sir!" replied Frank, readily, "this boat belongs to me, and I am not in government service. She is the Red Fin, submarine boat, and I am Frank Reade, Jr., of Readestown, U. S. A."

"Jemima!" exclaimed the youth, "are you Frank Reade, Jr.? I have heard of you and your wonderful inventions. I am in luck to have fallen in with you."

"Do you think so?" said Fradk, with a smile. "Wait until you are better requiring the force making a decision."

"To you think so? said Frack, with a smile." Wait dutil you are better acquainted before making a decision."

"I'll risk it," cried the castaway, heartily, "but, pardon me! Allow me to introduce myself. I am Howell Bond, of Philadelphia, U. S. A. I was owner of a stanch yacht, the Ailanthus, aboard which I was making a voyage to an island on the Tropic of Capricorn. I carried a crew of eight men, and had on board four professional divers with their outfits."

"Divers?" exclaimed Frank.

" Yes!"

"But what --"

"It is a long story, and you will admit a thrilling one when you hear it," said Howell Bond, "but first give me a little something to allay my faintness of stomach, if you can. And then I'll tell you a tale which will interest you."

"A thousand pardons, Mr. Bond!" cried Frank. "I was very thoughtless. Come into the cabin!"

Pomp hastened to prepare an appetizing repast for the castaway. While he was eating Bond told the story of the yacht's loss.

"We saw the storm coming," he said; "and my skipper, Captain

Benham got all in readiness to scud before it. But the very first blast tore out the main-mast. The Ailanthus careened, water rushed into her cabin and we were unable to right her. I never saw one of my companions afterwards. When the yacht went down I was drifting away from her hanging to a small life raft. But that got water-logged and I came across that hamper on which you found me, and here I am."
"Do you think any of your companions could have survived?" ask-

ed Frank.

"Not one of them!" said Howell positively; "they were all swept The young master of the Allanthus finished his meal and then donned a suit of clothes given him by Frank. He felt much better.

A little later he came on deck and joined Frank.

and what I was going to that isle in the Pacific with a crew of four divers for?"

"I should be very glad to hear it," said Frank. "I confess that

I am interested!"

"Ah!" cried the youth eagerly, "perhaps you will be interested enough to give me a little help in my project?"
"First I must hear what it is!" said Frank circumspectly.

"Certainly!"

Bond drew a paper from his pocket and spread it open before

Frank. It was a copy of a Philadelphia Dally.

"Read that!" he said tersely, indicating a news item, with quite a considerable amount of display heading. Thus Frank read:

A Hard Blow For Forger Bond! A report from Santiago that establish his innocence, has gone down in the
Pacific by striking a reef off the coast
of one of the Austral Islands.

" Nearly everybody in Philadelphia is familiar with the case of Mason Bond, one time President of the Popular Bank. Bond was previous to his downfall one of the most trusted and wealthiest holders of

vious to his downfall one of the most trusted and wealthiest holders of public trusts in this city. But one day a forged note was found in the bank papers by one of the directors. It contained Bond's indorsement in his own handwriting.

"The worthy president was unable to explain the indorsement on the note, and promptly disclaimed it. This led to a careful auditing of the bank's accounts which revealed startling facts. Nearly two hundred thousand dollars' worth of forged paper was found, all bearing Bond's endorsement. The bank president denied the endorsements flatly, and experts were called in to testify. They declared that the forced names and the endorsement were written by the same person forged names and the endorsement were written by the same person. Bond was arrested and tried for forgery and misappropriation of the bank's funds. He was convicted and is serving a long sentence in the penitentiary.

So stoutly did he maintain his innocence, that many of his friends Howell, has worked indefatigably and employed a detective to track a former cashier, Allan Dane, to New Zealand, whither he had gone after having resigned his position a few months previous. Whether Dane was the forger or not will never be known, for the ship Verona, aboard which he was returning to America in the custody of Jerry Denton, the detective, foundered off the Austral Isles and went to the bettern with all on heard.

bottom with all on board.

'Howell Bond has a letter from Denton, written from New Zealand, in which he declares that Dane had made a full confession of the forgery, clearing Mason Bond, and that the forger had agreed to come back to Philadelphia and make a clean breast of it. Both detective and forger with the evidence, however, went to the bottom of the sea with the ill-fated ship.

"So it looks as if Mason Bond must spend the rest of his life in prison, though it is said that his son, Howell will sail for the Austral

Isles with his yacht Ailanthus and a crew of divers to try and resurrect the lost evidence. The outcome will be awaited with inter-

CHAPTER V.

ON A REEF.

FRANK read this somewhat lengthy and detailed account with the greatest of interest.

When he had finished he looked up and saw Howell's eyes fixed intently upon him.

Well," said the young Philadelphian, "now you understand all. Am I entitled to your interest if not sympathy?"
"To both," said Frank warmly. "But—"

" What?"

"Do you know for a fact that Denton and his man went down on board the Verona?"

"I have his letter that they were to sail from New Zealand aboard her."

"There may be a slip there," said Frank, "but allowing that they are at the bottom of the ocean. Suppose you find their bodies. Will that be sufficient evidence?"

Howell turned a trifle pale.

"I am in hopes," he said, "that Denton had a written confession about his person. If that could be found——"

"Would it be in proper shape to read or identify? I must say the chances are slim."

"Well," said Howell, "fate has been against me. But I thought it

"Weil," said Howell, "late has been against me. But I thought it the least I could do for my father. It has been our drowning straw."

"You have done right," said Frank, decisively, "though as you say, you have had hard luck. But I think I can help you."

"Oh, but will you?" cried Howell eagerly.

"I cannot refuse you," said Frank, generously. "At least, we will visit the wreck of the Verona."

"That is all I ask!"

" It shall be done!"

"Oh, I can never repay you."

"I do not ask for pay," said Frank, "I am glad to do you the favor."

"And it is the greatest favor you could do me," cried Howell, joyfully. "I don't care now for the loss of my yacht. Why, with this submarine boat it will be the easiest thing in the world to visit the sunken ship."

"It will indeed!"

Howell could hardly realize his extreme good luck.

"It all seems too good," he cried. Then his face lengthened, "but by the way! How can we go aboard without diving apparatus?"

Frank smiled at this,

"Do you think I am so poorly equipped?" he said. "You may be sure that I have plenty of diving-suits."

" Good!"

"What is more they are of a better pattern than those employed by your divers. They are not dependent upon a lifeline and air-pump. They are provided with portable chemical generators, just as the air we breathe in this cabin while under water is supplied to us. With such a diving-suit you are untrammeled with pipes and lines and can remain under the surface indefinitely."

"Grand," cried Howell, excitedly. "You are a wonderful man, Mr. Reade."

Thus a new incentive was added to the cruise of the Red Fin in the

waters of the Pacific.

All were intensely interested in Howell Bord's case. The Red Fin was pushed ahead at full speed.

Days passed, and Cape Horn seas drew rapidly nearer. Perhaps

the most anxious one in the crew was Howell himself.

Yet he enjoyed the cruise aboard the Red Fln thoroughly. Yet he enjoyed the cruise aboard the ked fin thoroughly. He was never tired of inspecting the electric machinery, or of admiring the wonderful craft and its appointments.

"If this boat were my property," he said, "I should consider myself the most favored man in the world. It is a marvel."

"You're right, mate," declared Jack Grogan, who had taken a shine to the youth. "And there is not another like it on the high group."

The voyage was by no means monotonous.

While in the warm Equatorial seas much time was spent on deck of evenings. Barney was possessed of a genuine Irish fiddle and knew well how to play it.

Pomp had a banjo, and he was a comical singer of plantation songs.

Jack Grogan always had a wonderful salt yarn to tell.

And Frank and Howell became addicted to chess, both being crack players. So that none could complain of dull moments or lack of di-

Ships were met, and in some cases saluted, but no incident of note occurred until one day land was sighted.

They were now in cold, rough seas, and no one could go on deck without an overcoat.

Frank consulted his chart.

"We have made the Falkland Islands," he said. "We shall soon be in the South Pacific.'

What will the course be?" asked Howell, eagerly.

go outside the Cape or try the Straits of Magellan?"

"The nearest way is the best," declared Frank. "Jack Grogan here has been through the Magellan waters and knows the channels

"Right, skipper!" cried the old sailor. "I'll take the wheel when

we get there."
"Steer due west, Barney," said Frank. "We ought to be in the Straits in six hours."

The submarine heat stood off from Deso-

The next day at noon the submarine boat stood off from Desolation Island into the South Pacific.

The Austral Isles were below the twentieth degree of south latitude, and right on the tropic of Capricorn. The direct course then was strictly to the north-west, and this

was taken.

At once a change in the sea was noticed. The waves were less violent, the wind steadier, and even the atmosphere more balmy. This was a relief from the tempestuous experience of a week past.

The Red Fin struck boldly out into the broad waste of the Pa-

cific.

They were invading a part of the sea seldom sailed by ships, for the regular course from the islands and archipelagoes was generally

due east to Santiago, and thence south to the Horn.

But this did not hinder our voyagers in the least. In fact, they were very glad to have a clear course, for it necessitated less lookout. The keel of the Red Fin cut the waters of the Pacific with great

speed. Days drifted rapidly by.

"We should make the Austral Isles by Thursday," said Frank one day, "and this is Tuesday."

Howell Bond was nervous and eager. He could not dispel the sub-

ject from his mind.

"I only pray that I can find tangible evidence aboard the sunken ship," he declared. "If I can only succeed I shall be the happiest man in the world."

"I hope you will," said Frank sincerely. "We are going to do all we can to help you."

we can to help you."

"You are exceedingly kind," declared Howell, "but you will reap a reward some day, I feel sure."

Wednesday came, and Barney sighted land.

This created some excitement, for at first it was thought that it might be one of the Austral Isles. But Frank put an end to this hope.

"It is Pitcairn Isle, if I am right in my reckoning," he said. "The Australs are further to the west."

Howell had in his passession a record of the excet letitude and

Howell had in his possession a record of the exact latitude and longitude of the spot where the Verona went down, so there was no fear felt but that the sunken ship would be found all right enough.

Frank's surmise that the land sighted was Pitcairn, may have been correct, for it was in the afternoon of Thursday that the real Austral Isles came in sight.

It was the signal for a hearty cheer, in which all joined.
The Red Fin cruised off the shores of a number of them until Friday
orning. Then the locality where the Verona had struck was found.

morning. Then the locality where the Verona had struck was found.

Low lying reefs were here abundant, though the shore was fully ten miles distant. It could be easily understood why the Verona should have foundered.

"Nobody would look for reefs here," declared Frank. "The sea is as calm as a mill pond, and looks a hundred fathoms deep."

The words had barely left his lips when there was a sudden shock and a crash. The Red Fin keeled half upon her side and came to a stop.

The voyagers were nearly hurled overboard. The Red Fin was

motionless and half upon her side.
"Barney!" shouted Frank. "What have you done?"

The Celt white faced appeared in the doorway of the pilot house. "Shure, sor, divil a bit do I know. I saw nothin', sor!"
"Why, it's plain!" roared Jack Grogan, "we're on a reef, hard and fast too!"

There was no disputing this fact. The Red Fin had herself run full head upon the very reefs which had proved the destruction of the Verona.

It was a curious coincidence, but a no less serious incident. For a moment all on board were completely aghast and unable to act.

CHAPTER VI.

A BITTER DISAPPOINTMENT.

may be said to have recovered his wits first. FRANK READE, JR., He made instant action.

He dashed below, even down into the lower hold, to see if the hull of the boat was punctured.

If it was, then all on board would have to make lively shift to

reach the distant island, for the boat would be ruined.

If there was a puncture Frank knew that there would be water in the hold.

But there was none, and he felt a thrill of assurance. He made as careful an examination as possible. This satisfied

him that the boat had merely slid up onto a big reef and was lodged there.

Then he went back and tried the engines to see if there was power

enough in them to pull her off. But this effort failed.

Matters now resolved themselves into a problem. The chief feature of this was, how to get the boat off the reef.

This it certainly was necessary to do and at once, or the first souther would smash her all to pieces. The fact that the Red Fin was a submarine boat was of no benefit to her whatever in this predicament.

Nobody could be blamed for the disaster. Even if they could, it would not have helped matters.

"There's only one way, mates," said Jack Grogan.

"Eh?" exclaimed Frank. "What is that, Jack?"

"I reckon it's best to try and kedge her off."

"What do you mean by that?" asked Howell Bond.

"Many a good ship has got off a sand bar that way," declared Grogan; "ther way to do ther trick is to take ther kedge anchor in a boat out three or four hundred fathoms from the ship and drop it overboard with a big cable in the ring. When the kedge catches a good hold on ther bottom why jest make tight with your cable round ther capstan and all hands stand by with ther bars to haul the ship over toward the kedge. She'll move quicker that way than any if my reckoning is right."

"On my word, Jack," cried Frank, "there is logic in your plan. Suppose we try to kedge the boat off this reef?"

"I'm ready to stand my trick at the capstan, mate," cried old

'I'm ready to stand my trick at the capstan, mate," cried old Jack. There was a good kedge anchor at the Red Fin's bow and plenty of

cable. The idea was no sooner conceived than executed.

The Red Fin's boat was put out. But the anchor would have sunk

it with its great weight, so it was not taken aboard. But a stanch raft was made, and the anchor floated on this. In this manner by towing the raft after the boat the anchor was carried out

full fifty yards from the Red Fin's stern. Then it was "kedged" or sunk and given a grip on the bottom.

Back to the submarine boat the cable was carried The plan of Jack Grogan was now tried for all it was worth, And

it proved a complete success.

The Red Fin was drawn off the reef slowly but surely. Not a plate was strained in the operation.

Once the Fin was affoat again the anchor was taken aboard, and now lead and line was used.

The search for the sunken wreck was now begun.

Suddenly Frank said:

"We have accomplished all that we can on the surface. Now let

us try submarine work."
"That's right," cried Howell. "I feel sure that will be more effective."

So all retreated into the cabin, Frank turned the lever, and the Fin

To the surprise of all, full two hundred fathoms of water was found. But the reef line towered above them like a mountain of white coral, Along the reef now the search was made.

It was easy to see now that the deep sea life of the Pacific was far different from that of the Atlantic.

The bottom of the sea was much more free from seaweed and marine growth. There was sand and coral everywhere. The water was clearer, and the fishes of a greater variety of color.

The search-light was employed to good advantage now.

Suddenly Howell, who was in the pilot house keeping up a keen watch, cried:

"There she is!"

And sure enough, full in the path of the search-light, was seen a sunken wreck.

That it was the Verona there was no doubt. Very quickly the Red Fin was alongside.

The sunken ship did not show greatly the effect of its long submersion in the sea. Everything about the hull appeared clean and

But no sign of the drowned crew was of course seen anywhere. If there had been any on deck doubtless the sharks had carried them off.

But Bond had not dreamed of finding his evidence upon the vessel's deck or outside her cabin.

The Red Fin settled down in the sands quite near the Verona. Then Frank brought up the diving suit.

These consisted of a helmet and a chemical reservoir and generator, which was strapped upon the back. There were also weighted shoes.

Howell donned one of the suits as well as Frank. Barney also put

on one. It was arranged that Jack Grogan and Pomp should remain aboard

the Red Fin. The three divers, equipped with hatchets and knives, entered the vestibule. The cabin door was shut and the vestibule filled with water.

Then the outer door was opened and they walked out on the ves-

sel's deck. The pressure for a moment made Howell sick.

But he presently recovered, and then they clambered over the rail. They stood upon the bed of the sea.

This was in one hundred fathoms of water. It was an odd sensa-

Frank led the way to the hull of the sunken ship. He climbed easily up the side and stood on deck.

Barney followed him and Howell came next.

The sight presented to the divers was such as might have been exected. There was a tangled heap of wreckage and matted rigging. But no sign of a human body. Frank made signs to the others and But no sign of a human body.

approached the companionway.

This led down into the cabin. The critical moment had come for Howell Bond.

Each of the divers carried a small electric lamp on the brow of their

helmets, so that the darkness below decks was dispelled.

Down the cabin stairs they went; a moment more and they had reached the door of the main salon.

It was closed.

Frank turned the knob and entered, but in spite of his cool nerve, he shrank back for a moment.

The cabin was filled with floating human bodies; these, obeying the

draught, had come sailing up to the door. But Frank overcame his repugnance and entered. Barney and Bond

followed him. Overcoming the first horror of the situation all were ready for work.

Frank placed his helmet close beside Bond's and shouted:

"You can identify the detective, Denton or Dane, the forger, if
they are here?"

"Yes!" raplied Howell, "only let me find them."

"We will examine every body on board. Then we will search the state-rooms."

Each corpse was closely scrutinized. There were fully a dozen in the cabin. But not one of them could Howell identify.

"Our men are not here!" he said, finally, "let us look in some other part of the ship."

"I have an idea that they were on deck, and that the sharks have got them long since," said Howell, despondently. "Fate is against

me."
"If they are aboard this ship we will find them," said Frank, resolutely.

"Begorra, there's another cabin beyant this," declared Barney.
"So there is," agreed Frank; "come on."
Into the next cabin they went. But it was empty.
Then they went into the forecastle. Here a number of poor sailors yet slept in their bunks. Back they came to the after part of the ship

The cooking galley, the state-rooms, and even the hold, came in for a careful search. But no other bodies were found.

The bodies of Denton and Dane could not be found. This seemed to establish the fact that they were lost overboard when the vessel

It was a dismaying reflection to Howell.

Every state-room was thoroughly searched, but not even the faint-est shadow of evidence in the behalf of Mason Bond could be found.

Howell drew a deep sigh; it was a bitter disappointment to him. Hours were spent aboard the sunken ship, but flually Frank touched

Howell Bond on the arm.
"Your pardon," he said, "but I think we had better return aboard the Fin. Your men are not aboard this ship. They must have sailed by another."

"No, no!" declared Howell, positively, "they were aboard this ship. But being on deck with the crew they lost their lives when the ship foundered. The sharks have probably taken them."

"Well, there may be logic in your theory, Bond. But there is a chance they have escaped."

" Escaped!"

The one word burst almost fiercely from Howell's lips. It was one mad, wild avenue of hope. But the next moment it vanished.

"No," he rejoined, "that could not be. We should have heard from them if they had escaped. I tell you they have long been food

No other theory would be accepted by the youth. After the return to the Fin when all were once more in the cabin he gave way to bitter

"I tell you Fate is against my father," he cried, "there is no hope for him this side the grave. The one man whose confession would have saved him is dead, and that, of course, ends it. I only wish I could die myself."

CHAPTER VII.

IN THE LABYRINTH.

Or course all felt sorry for young Bond. But nothing could be said or done to console him.

The question now arose as to what it was best to do next.
"Don't mind me," said Howell earnestly. "Go ahead with your deep sea explorations. It cannot affect me or my hopes now."

So Frank and Grogen decided to explore a coral cave, the broad mouth of which yawned near.

The submarine boat's prow was turned into this, and now a most thrilling experience was begun.

Into the coral cavern the boat easily made its way.

The human imagination can hardly picture the real beauties and wonders of that deep sea cave.

It is utterly beyond description.

The Fin sailed under great arches of glittering coral of all hues, which shone resplendent in the glare of the electric light.

Even Howell Bond repressed his sorrow to admire the scene. At

every turn it only increased in grandeur.

The submarine boat sailed through magnificent palace halls, under peristyles and pagodas, domes and arches. It was like a trip through fairvland.

And indeed so engrossed did they become in the scene that no one thought of keeping account of the course pursued.

It was labyrinthine and it occurred to none that it would not be easy to find the way out into the open sea again.

For hours the exploration of the coral cave went on.
"On my word!" cried Frank; "do you suppose this cavern can extend to the center of the earth?"

We have come a good ways already," said Howell; "had we not

"We have come a good ways already," said Howell; "had we not better proceed with more of caution?"

"Barney," said Frank, "have you marked our course?"

"Divil a bit," admitted the Celt.

However, none doubted but that it would be easy enough to find a way out of the cave. Tiring of the labyrinth after a while Frank turned the boat's bow about.

They now proceeded upon what they believed was the proper way out of the coral cave. For somewhile the Fin kept on.

But all the while the cavern arches seemed to deepen and no open sea appeared. Frank flashed the search-light down all the different passages of the labyrinth and finally cried:
"Stop her, Barney!"

The Celt brought the boat to a standstill. Grogan, who had been at the observation window touched his hat respectfully and said to

"Shure, skipper. I think we're off the reckoning."
"You are right, Jack," agreed the young inventor, "our position is a serious one. Unless we can find that exit from this cave our fate is sealed."

The submarine voyagers looked at each other's white features and

questioning eyes.

"What?" exclaimed Howell. "You do
a possibility of such a thing, Mr. Reade?"

Frank nodded his head. "You do not intimate that there is

"I fear our situation is most serious."

"It's bad enough," said Grogan, shaking his head.
Barney scratched his head in a puzzled way.

"Be jabers, Misther Frank," he cried, "it wud be loike being buried aloive. An' divil a trail we've made to show us the way out."

"No," said Frank, "the Fin has left no trail. If we find our way

out it must be by chance."
"Then I should think the best thing we can do is to keep on the move," said Howell, " for at any moment chance may take us out of this trap."

"Easy, mate," interposed Grogan; "it might be takin' us a hun-

dred miles deeper as well."

"You are both right," said Frank. "Yet in lieu of a better plan, I think perhaps Howell's suggestion might be the best to adopt. Yet we will proceed with our eyes open for a loophole."

The fin now moved forward slowly, and the best of lookouts for an outlet was kept. But 10 matter in what direction they turned, they seemed further and further from the point where they had entered the cave.

It was a veritable labyrinth.

A random search was all that could be made. But the new wonders of the coral cave unfolded at every turn could not help but interest the voyagers.

"It is a marvelous scene," declared Howell Bond with admiration; "if it were upon the surface of the earth and accessible to visitors, it

would be deemed the wonder of the world."

"You are right," agreed Frank, "but just at presnt its attractiveness is lost upon me. It would be greater if I only knew a possible way out of here."

The young inventor could not help but regret the motive which had

At least he was inclined to blame himself severely for his neglect to mark his course. It would have been easy to have done this with a slender coil of electric wire, used as Jasan did his twine when in quest of the Minataur in the labyrinth of Crete.

This would have enabled the voyagers to have easily found their

Also this point had been neglected.

But exciting incidents were close at hand to claim the attention of the voyagers and divert their thoughts from the exigency of being lost,

Thus far there had been visible little signs of fish life in the cav-

There were a few schools of small fish resembling porgy, but nothing larger.

Jack Grogan was more observant upon points of this kind than the others, and remarked this fact.
"It's mighty queer," he soliloquized. "I don't see what has be-

come of the bream and other fish. Do ye s'pose thar's suthin' as eats 'em up?"

"Eh?" exclaimed Howell. "Do you mean some submarine monster? The existence of such might explain the scarcity of fish in this cavern, as they would doubtless form his food."

"Jes' so, mate," said Grogan, with a confident nod. "Keep yer

eyes peeled. We'll be apt to run across his lordship afore we run many more knots on this course.

Everybody laughed at the old salt's earnestness. But near events

turned the laugh upon them.

Suddenly the Fin shot out into a broad chamber. It was of immense dimensions, and its roof was fully a hundred feet high and supported by mighty columns of a material which resembled jasper and

"Eureka!" exclaimed Howell Bond, in admiration, "here is the great banquet hall of the deep sea nobles. What a mighty chamber

"Ay!" cried Grogan, in startled tones, "and there's the royal prince imself. Port yer wheel there, pilot."

Barney saw the peril and brought the wheel hard a-port. It was

none too soon.

For across the chamber from a dark niche there shot a leviathian form with open jaws straight for the Fin.

Had that huge body struck the submarine boat full force it would no doubt have crushed it.

As it was the glancing blow along the side was a shock sufficient to knock all from their feet.

The cavern monster had been but vaguely seen, yet it was plain that he was of a species not classified by the disciples of pisciculture. Indeed, it seemed to partake more of the character of a hippopotomus, without legs, than anything else.

It had a mouth of enormous dimensions, and adorned with savage

rows of teeth. One sweep of its mighty tail would make the water in the cavern chamber boil.

The submarine boat had come around most abruptly. The cave

monster had shot past it.

Frank Reade, Jr., knew that it would be madness to risk another onslaught of the leviathan foe.

So he hastily sprung to the wheel, and started the boat into one of the side passages.

Through this it ran like an arrow, but Bond gave a cry of alarm.

"It is after us!" he cried; "it will certainly overtake us!"

And indeed the astounded voyagers were able to see that the monster was really after them. It was tearing along through the passage at railroad speed.

Frank knew well what the penalty would be if they were overtaken. The Fin would be crushed.

There seemed but one thing to do and this was to put on all speed.

But it could be seen that the cave monster was gaining.
"We're going to be overtaken," said Howell Bond, with white face;
ti's all up with us, Frank."

The young inventor did not answer, but a grim smile played across his face. He called to Barney.

"Come here and take the wheel," he said; "keep up all speed unless you see an obstacle ahead."

All roight, sor."

"What are you going to do?" asked Bond, with interest.
"I will presently show you," was Frank's ambiguous rep!y. Then

he went hastily below.

Down into the hold he went.

Here in the very stern of the boat and over the propeller shaft there was a nice little room with windows looking down into the bed of the

This had been designed by Frank for the purpose of picking up shells or any other desired articles from the bottom of the ocean without having to leave the boat.

The method was very ingenious, and consisted of a bell shaped globe in which one could stand upright. This globe could instantly be made air-tight by closing its entrance.

Then a slide in the hull of the boat was pulled open. The water was prevented from coming into the globe by the resistance of air forced into the globe, much on the principle of the old time diving

It was then easy to put one's arm down through the trap and pick

up any object he chose.

Frank had entered the globe and held in his hand a small square package, to which was attached a quantity of small steel wire. He measured the distance between the sea monster and the Fin. Then he quickly dropped the package overboard.

CHAPTER VIII.

OUT OF DANGER-THE LABYRINTH CURREET.

THE package Frank dropped contained dynamite. The wire was connected with the dynamos. His purpose was to kill the cave monster by a timed explosion.

This was a skillful trick and all depended upon a quick eye and quick action.

The wire spun from its spool with great swiftness. Frank's finger

was upon the electric key.
Suddenly he pressed it. The result was most thrilling.
There was a terrific shock. The water boiled furiously about the stern of the Fin.

Then it cleared. Nothing was to be seen of the cave monster. Barney slackened speed.

Frank came running up into the pilot house. His face wore a relieved and joyful expression.

"I think we have killed the monster," he cried, "do you see anything of it?"

"The water is too cloudy back there just now," cried Howell; but he evidently has ceased his pursuit. Will it not be safe to go back and see?"

Barney had brought the submarine boat to a stop. Frank did not hesitate.

"Yes," he cried; "turn about and we will go back!"

The Fin was cramped about with some difficulty in the passageway. Then back upon its course it ran for some ways.

The result was that very quickly a huge dark object was seen just

ahead blocking the passage.

It was the cave monster. The dynamite shell had exploded just under it and killed it instantly.

All drew a breath of relief.
"Well," said Howell, "I'm glad he's out of the way. That was a close call for us!"

"If he'd ever hit the ship full an' fair he'd made it tremble," de-ared Grogan. "I reckon we'd been ready to turn into Davy clared Grogan. Jones' locker!"

"There is no doubt of that!" said Frank; "but I did not intend that he should burst the ship if I could help it."

that he should burst the ship if I could neip it."

"Begorra, it's a big puzzle as will sthick Misther Frank," cried Barney. "Shure, he's a hard one to beat."

As the sea monster's body blocked the passage quite fully, it was decided to take another which led off abruptly to the left. And this led the submarine boat into a different part of the labyrinth.

It also led to the most thrilling and important incidents of the trip through the could be winth.

through the coral labyrinth.

The boat came out into what seemed like another huge chamber, though its beauty was not so great as that of the other which they

had just left.

But here a certain startling fact became impressed upon Frank. This was the presence of a strong current of water in the cavern. This could mean but one thing to the young inventor. Without an

outlet there could be no such powerful circulation.

He tested the current and found that it crossed the cavern chamber, and seemed to emanate from a narrow aperture in the north wall, and made an outlet through another aperture in the south wall!

Neither of these apertures were large enough to admit of the passage of the submarine boat. Frank regretted this much.

But such an obstacle did not daunt him. He brought out his div-

ing suits and called his companions up for a conference.
"I'm going to penetrate that crevice yonder," he said, "and see if it does not lead out into the open sea. If it does, then I believe we

will find a way out for the air ship."

"Good!" cried Howell Bond. "I pray for your success, Frank."

It was decided that only Grogan should accompany Frank. It made Bond's head ache to wear the heavy helmet; so he decided to

stay behind. Frank and Grogan were quickly equipped. Then they let them-selves over the rail, and started for the aperture in the coral wall. "Barney!" said Howell Bond just as they vanished into the crev-

"Well, sor?"

"Do you know I have a queer feeling. I am afraid that they'll never come back from that hole in the wall."

"Begorra, Misther Frank is a hard man to bate!" declared the

"I know that. But I can't help the feeling just the same.

Bond's declaration was more of a prophecy than he had imagined. Frank and Grogan were destined to never return from that crevice in the coral wall.

Time passed.

It seemed as if they had been absent a century. The three men on board the Red Fin kept a strained gaze upon the spot where the explorers had disappeared.

They were looking to see them reappear. But they did not.

An hour passed.

Barney and Pomp had been busy about their respective duties for some moments past. They now came into the cabin.

Howell Bond turned from the observation window and said:

"I am beginning to get anxious, Barney. They ought to have returned before this."

"Shure, sor, yez kin trust Misther Frank," said the Celt, confidently; "it's loikely that they are lukin' hard fer a place to git out aventhis eternal labyrinth."

"Golly, don' yo' fret 'bout Marse Frank," put in Pomp. "He am a berry hard man to beat. Dey come around a'right yit!"

But Bond was far from being reassured. He was willing to credit Frank with unusual inventive powers but he did not by any manner.

Frank with unusual inventive powers, but he did not by any means oelieve him omnipotent.

Another half hour passed. Then two hours had drifted by. Still no sign of the absent explorers.

Bond could stand it no longer.

He arose and paced the cabin. Finally he stopped, and said for-

cibly:
"I tell you there's something wrong; something has happened to those fellows be sure!"

Barney had now begun to think this way himself. Pomp's eyes were big as saucers.

"Does yo' really 'spose dat am a tac'?" the darky gasped.

"Bejabers, it luks bad," agreed Barney. "Shure, phawt ought we "Bejabers, it laks bad," agreed Barney. "Shure, phawt ought we to do, Misther Bond? I'm afther thinkin' we ought to go afther thim!" "Certainly!" cried Bond excitedly. "They are certainly in trouble or they would have returned before this."

"Begorra thin!" cried Barney; "I'm wid yez. We'll put on some divin' suits an' go afther thim!"

"Agreed!" cried Howell. "Who shall be the ones to go?"

"Agreed!" cried Howell. "Who shall be the ones to go?"
All exchanged glances.
"I'll go fer wan!" said Barney.
"Yo' better lemme go too," said Pomp.
But Howell put up his hand.
"Hold on!" he said. "We can't all go, and if anyone is to stay behind it ought to be a man familiar with the machinery of the boat."
"Yez are roight," cried Barney; "begorra, naygur, it's fer yez to stay!"

Pomp was inclined to demur a little, but finally gave in all right.

This settled the question.

Barney and Howell donned their diving suits.

They were now all ready for the quest. But an idea occurred to

"Hold on!" he said. "We don't want to get into the same scrape that they are in. When we go into that crevice we want to be sure we can find our way back!"

We can find our way back!

He went into the pilot-house and secured a coil of very fine wire. He also secured a telegraphic key and repeater, for use under water, the invention of Frank Reade, Jr.

"Now," he said, "we can communicate with Pomp at any time. We shall be sure of getting back safely."

"Bejabers, yez are a man av brains yesilf!" said Barney, with admiration; "lade on an' I'll folly yez!"

"They wort into the west thus and sleed the door. A few moments."

They went into the vestibule and closed the coor. A few moments

later they were on the deck.

Then they descended to the floor of the cavern and started for the

crevice. Bond carefully unwound the wire as he went on.

A few moments later they squeezed their way through the crevice.

They were in a narrow passage between high walls.

They followed this for what seemed an interminable distance. Then

with a thrill of horror Bond chanced to glance down at his feet.

He grasped Barney's arm and drew him back just in time. There yawned a deep abyss, which might lead to the center of the earth for aught they knew.

Another moment and they would have been over the verge. The fall in itself might not have been so frightful, for a fall under water is more or less broken.

But the question of getting out of the abyss was to be considered. They could safely reckon upon a narrow escape.

Bond put his helmet close to Barney's and shouted:

"This is a close call for us; do you suppose Frank and Grogan walked into this pit?"

it was a horrible thought.
"Bejabers I don't know," replied the Celt. "Shure it looks loike it."

" If so-

"Be me sowl they're down there, dead or alive."

"I pray they are alive," said Bond, fervently, "but how shall we ad out. We cannot make them hear."

Here was a problem. But Bond was fast proving himself a man of inventive faculties.

"Hold on!" he said.

He severed the wire which he held in his hands and connected the telegraph key and repeater to it. Then he connected it with the battery he had and called up Pomp.
"Are you all right?" he said in the Morse alphabet.
"Yes," was the reply.

" Yes,

Then Bond made a brief account of the discovery of the abyss and their fears.

Pomp expressed a hope that they would succeed, and then bond drew from a pocket a small incandesent tube.

This he connected with the wire and the battery, making a light

stronger than the one he carried on his helmet.

He next threw himself flat upon the verge of the abyss.

There was a black depth below. He once thought he saw the twinkle of a light in the darkness. But it must have been an optical delusion.

He proceeded to lower his electric lamp down into the darkness.

Down it slid rapidly.

He saw the wall of rock dark and slimy. The water was stagnant, and finally he reached the end of his coil of wire. There was no bot-

CHAPTER IX.

BOND TRIES HIS HAND AT DEEP SEA BLASTING.

In that instant one horrifying thought alone came to Bond. This

was that his companions were forever lost.
"They are dead?" he thought.
And yet he would not abandon hope. He turned to Barney and said:

"I wish I had a rope long enough. I'd go down there."

But the Celt shook his head.

"Shure, sor, if Misther Frank an' Grogan have fallen down there, thin it's the end av thim." And this conclusion began to force itself slowly upon young Bond.

He grew sick at heart.

Yet he would not abandon the spot until he had made as thorough

This satisfied him. He turned to Barney and said:
"I am satisfied. They are beyond our aid. Let us go back."
Slowly and sadly they gathered up the wire and instruments and went back to the submarine boat. Pomp met them at the vestibule

"Shure it's all up wid thim," announced Barney gloomily, as he entered, "an' I'm afther thinkin' it'll soon be all up wid us."

"Sho! yo' don' say dat," said Pomp, in dismay. "Neber yo' be too suah. Marse Frank he may turn up yet."

"I am afraid we have seen the last of them," declared Bond; "but we have ourselves to look out for. What move shall we make?"

Here was another problem. There was a natural aversion to leaving the spot for fear that Frank and Grogan might return. Certainly it was necessary to remain a reasonable length of time.

So the voyagers settled themselves down to a period of waiting. Time passed on leaden wings.

The crevice was constantly kept watch of. But yet the missing

men did not appear.

"I don't care what anybody says," cried Bond, forcibly, "it was a piece of nonsense the way they went off anyway. There was everything to lose and nothing to gain. It was an ill judged act."

Barney and Pomp did not like this attack upon the good sense of their master, but they said nothing. And thus the hours drag-

ged on. After a while it became morally certain that the two men were not going to return.

A whole day had passed. They certainly would not have voluntarily

remained away so long.

When it became finally assured, beyond a doubt, that the missing men were likely never to return, it was decided to leave the spot and seek a way out of the labyrinth. But an idea had come into Bond's head while they had been wait-

ing. He gave it serious weight now.

This was the feasibility of blowing their way out of the coral laby-

rinth with dynamite.

rinth with dynamite.

Of course, there was a great risk to be incurred and a possibility of failure. It was a chance which they must accept.

He studied the current of water which flowed through the cavern chamber. He knew that it came in through one crevice and went out through the one by which Frank and Grogan had vanished.

"Now let us see," philosophized Bond, "this circulation means something. That current of water must come from somewhere, and it's my opinion it comes from the open sea. If Frank and Grogan had gone in the other direction—I'm going to try it."

He imparted his scheme to Barney and Pomp.

"I am going to blow out the inlet of this labyrinth current," he said. "I think it possible to blow our way out of this place!"

"Be jabers, sor, we are wid yez," said Barney; "jist tell us phwat to do."

to do.

"There'll be little for you to do," said Howell—"except to help me place the cartridges in the crevice."
"We kin jes' do dat," cried Pomp, turning a flip flap. "Mebbe we fin' Marse Frank yet, fo' p'raps he fin' his way around to us data-wav.

"We will try," said Howell, resolutely. Preparations were quickly made.

There was plenty of dynamite aboard, and Bond soon had a num-

ber of cartridges ready.

Then he and Barney put on their diving suits.

They left the cabin, and soon had succeeded in placing the cartridges in the crevice through which the powerful current came.

They were placed at intervals here, and wires connecting them with a battery on board the Fin were laid.
"Now, we're all right," declared Bond. "Now, for the explosion!"

Returning aboard the Fin, Barney changed the position of the sub-marine boat in such a way, that the shock would not be so apt to strike it.

Then all was announced in readiness.

It was a critical moment for the voyagers. They were accepting many chances and a great risk.

For aught they knew, the explosion might bring the walls of the cavern tumbling down about their ears. The Fin might be crushed or so wedged in that she could never be extricated.

But this was no worse fate than to wander for an indefinite length

of time through the windings of the eternal labyrinth.

As well die one way as the other.

This was Bond's philosophy; so he was resolved to take the chances. He placed his hand on the efectric button.

A slight pressure, and he knew that the worst would be quickly known. He hesitated but a moment.

Then he pressed the button.

There was a dull rumble and roar like an earthquake shock. The Fin heaved half upon her side.

Things went rattling about the cabin, and for a few moments all was chaos.

The water was so churned that nothing could be seen beyond the windows.

Then the submarine boat righted, the water cleared, and it was seen, with a spasm of relief by the voyagers, that the cavern had not

But where the crevice had been there was an enormous cavity, into

which the Fin could easily sail.

"Hurrah!" cried Bond. "I told you we would hit it! No harm done either. Now if that route only takes us into the open sea we shall be all right."

But Barney and Pomp shook their heads mournfully.
"Golly, we jes' kain't go way an' leave Marse Frank behind," said Pomp. "Divil a bit," agreed Barney.

Bond was astonished.
"Why," he exclaimed, "are you not satisfied that they are beyond our aid?"

"How yo' make dat out, sah?" asked Pomp, bluntly.
"Why, did not Barney and I follow them to the verge of the pit into which they fell? What better proof could we have? They are past aid I tell you!"

"Bejabers, that may be thrue," said Barney astutely, "but there's many a slip, as they say, and on me worrad, sor, I would like to see Misther Frank's dead body afore I leave him behindt, sor!"

Bond saw the purpose of the two faithful fellows. This was an ex-

ample of noble devotion.
"Why certainly!" he hastened to say; "be sure that if there is the least doubt as to the fate of Frank and Grogan I am willing to waithere any length of time. Nobody can be more anxious for their safe return than I!"

"We believe yez, sor," said Barney, "an' we'll sthand by yez until we know for shure if Misther Frank is dead or not."

"That settles it," agreed Bond, "but are we going to make sure of

This was a problem.

Barney nor Pomp either could not easily solve it. The darky was reflective for a few moments, and then sald:

"I jes' tell yo' wha' we do. We jes' stay yere till we hears from Marse Frank."

" Begorra, that's it!" agreed Barney.

Bond could not help a smile.
"Why, I see what you fellows are up to," he cried. "You are not willing to for a moment accept the possibility that Frank will not re-

Barney and Pomp looked confused but did not answer.

That was certainly the truth. They had become endowed with such supreme confidence in their young master that they could not for a moment reconcile any other belief but that he would return.

Bond was nonplused.

He saw that it was of no use to attempt an argument with the two devoted servants.

He decided upon a different move. He adopted diplomacy.

He was auxious to explore the new passage opened up by the dynamite and see if it really did lead out into the open sea. But would

Barney and Pomp be agreeable.

He broached the matter to them.

"Let's sail in there a little ways," he pleaded. "We need not get lost for we can put out a wire to show us a way back. We will return after a bit of exploration."

Finally, Permonant Pomp agreed.

Finally Barney and Pomp agreed.

The Fin sailed slowly in against the current As the boat went on the passage widened.

The search-light was thrown out and for a long way ahead every

object was visible.

It was easy to see that the sea cavern here was much different from that part which they had been traversing for so long.

The roof was higher and there was less of the coral incrustations. What did it mean! Were they coming upon a change of scene?

Bond firmly believed it.

He was confident that they were going to come out right into the core sea. He manipulated the searchlight with this in view.

open sea. He manipulated the searchlight with this in view.

And suddenly a great cry escaped his lips.
"Eureka!" he shouted, "here is the true exit from the cavern.
See! there is no roof above us!"

It was a moment of most intense excitement. The three voyagers could hardly contain themselves.

Bond would have sent the boat to the surface at once to make sure

of their location. But Barney and Pomp demurred at this.

"Begorra, now we must foind Misther Frank, dead or aloive!"

cried Barney; "if we do thin we'll cum here an' go up to the surface, but divil a bit before."

CHAPTER X.

THE CASTAWAYS.

Bur meanwhile what had been the fate of Frank and Grogan? Had they gone to their death?

Leaving the Fin, they had entered the crevice in the coral wall as

But not by the same route as that used by Bond and Barney. The cleft in the coral cliff was of peculiar formation.

There were really two passages converging at this point. In entering the crevice, by turning to the left, one entered the passage leading to the precipice and pit which Bond and Barney visited. The other passage would never be suspected.

But turning to the right, Frank and Grogan had averted a fearful fate possibly, and entered upon a vastly different train of incidents.

The passage which they entered seemed to trend upward. They fol-

lowed it for some while.

Then Frank placed his helmet close beside Grogan's and shout-

"Where can the end of this passage be? It seems intermina-

ble."
"Yonder is a turn, mate," said the cld salt; "it ought to tell us

something new."

Toward the turn they rapidly went. This brought them out into what seemed to be an immense cavern chamber with a bed of the whitest sand for a floor.

What was peculiar was that the roof seemed so high up that it could not be discerned through the dark waters.

Neither Frank nor Grogan suspected the truth that there was no

roof. They were out of the coral labyrinth in reality.

They wandered on over the sandy waste. And what seemed peculiar to Frank was the fact that they seemed to be continually ris-

ing.

He could not help but mention this to Grogan.

"What do you think, Jack?" he said. "Are we nearing the surf-

The old salt had been intently regarding a bit of marine plant he

had picked up, and now made answer:

"Skipper, I don't want to surprise ye, but there's something very peculiar about this plant. It and certain forms of fish life ye see around here are only found in shallow water and near the shore."

Frank looked at the other intently.

"Which would indicate that we are near a shore and the surface?" he asked.

"Just so," replied Grogan. "Keep your weather eye open."
Frank was willing to admit that all this was very unusual. But he never attached any real significance to it and what happened in the next few moments was a revelation.

Suddenly Grogan stopped and clutched his arm.
"Look up," he shouted. "Great dolphins! What d'ye think of that, mate?"

Frank looked up and beheld a most astounding sight. through not more than twenty feet of clearest water he saw the sky with fleecy clouds and the sun shining warmly.

For a moment so astounded was he that he could not speak or act.

"Great Scott!" he finally ejaculated. "We are at the surface and

out of the labyrinth."

"Just so," cried old Jack gleefully. "Come on, Frank, let us take one breath of upper air afore we go back."

"But!" exclaimed Frank; "you think we are on the shore of an

island?"

"In course, skipper. Jest follow this bank of sand far enough and you'll come right up onto the beach of a coral isle."
"Come on then!" cried Frank. "I am going to prove your

words!"

Up the sandy slope they sprang, Every moment they drew near-the surface. Then they emerged from the water. er the surface. Then they emerged from the water.

A row of palms and tropical shrubs were before them. Long beaches of white sand relieved by the intense green of the foliage.

A great mirror-like basin of water it was which they had just

emerged from.

Far across it upon the other shore was a narrow passage leading out into the sea.

Frank saw at once where they were. They were upon the shores of

the lagoon which formed the interior of the atols, or coral isle.

The labyrinth then had led them completely under the isle and brought them out in the lagoon. It was a curious fact.

They took off their helmets and retreated to the shade of a clump of palms, for the sun was hot.

"Well," said Frank, "here we are upon the surface."
"You're right, mate."

"But the question arises—how are we going to get the Red Fin up here? She certainly cannot come up through the passage by which we came."

"That's clear enough, skipper," agreed the sailor.
"Have you any plan to suggest?"

Grogan was thoughtful.

"We might blow the passage open, I reckon," he said.

"Ah," exclaimed Frank with inspiration, "I never thought of that.

It would be a likely plan. I have plenty of dynamite."

"But ye'd have to look out that ye didn't blow the coral all about the ship and bury it."

"To be sure," agreed Frank, "but I think we could look out for that. Your plan is a good one Grogan. We will try it."

"I'm with ye, mate."

"Let us hasten back as quickly as possible. The others, must be

"Let us hasten back as quickly as possible. The others must be anxious about us." They stepped out of the clump of palms. But just as they did so a

voice sounded in their rear. "Pardon gentlemen, but are you water nympths or really human beings? If the latter wait and let us make your acquaintance.

Astounded beyond measure, Frank and the old sailor turned about. This to be confronted by two men whose appearance indicated that they must be castaways.

Their clothing was almost in shreds, their hair disheveled and their

skin sunburned frightfully. Yet it was easy to see that they were

"Whalebones an' Eskimos!" gasped Grogan. "What on earth is this? Castaways are ye?"

The four men stood and looked at each other critically. Then Frank

spoke:

"Allow me to answer your question, my friend. We are not water nymphs, but human beings, and very practical ones at that, being of Yankee birth."

"Well, so am I a Yankee," cried one of the men. "Our ship went down on a reef out here some months ago. This gentleman and myself were the only survivors.
"Indeed," exclaimed Frank; "then you have been leading a Crusoe

existence here, I imagine."

"We have, and to tell the truth at times have feared starvation, though we are better provided for now."

"Well," said Frank, "I am glad to meet you."

"The same," replied the other, "but pardon my curiosity. Are

you also castaways? Frank hesitated.

"Well, partly so," he declared; "that is to say, we have been for days imprisoned in a coral labyrinth."
"A labyrinth?"
"Yes."

"Where is it?"

" Under this isle."

For a moment the two castaways looked plainly incredulous. Then one of them said:

"You have on diving suits. But I see no life lines or air-

pumps."

"They are not of that pattern," replied Frank. And then he briefly explained the mechanism of the diving helmets. The castaways were interested.

But not quite satisfied.

"Pardon my curiosity again," said one of them, "but do you live at the bottom of the sea? Or have you a ship in waiting near

"In one sense, yes," replied Frank. "I have a submarine boat in the labyrinth below waiting for us."

"Are we dreaming, Dane?" said one of the castaways in amazement. "We can understand the diving suits. But the submarine "Nevertheless it is true," replied Frank.
"Your pardon again; may I ask your name?"
"Frank Reade, Jr., of Readestown, U. S. A.," replied Frank.

The second castaway gave a little cry.
"Why, Denton," he exclaimed. "You must have heard of Frank Reade, Jr., the famous inventor of the air-ship. Are you not the man,

"I am!" replied Frank.
"Jericho!" exclaimed the other. "And you have come out with a submarine boat?"

Frank nodded with a smile. "Now that I have complied with your request," he said, "will you comply with mine. Who are you, and what was the name of your

"The name of our ship was the Verona," was the reply. "My name is Jerry Deuton and I am a detective. This gentleman's name is Allan Dane and he is my prisoner."

For a moment Frank was dumfounded. Then he saw the whole

With an effort he composed himself.

"The Verona went down by striking a reef?" he asked.

"You are taking this man hone a self-confessed forger?"

"Just so," replied Denton, with a questioning gaze. "Why all these questions?"

"Well," replied Frank, "it is our errand in these waters with my submarine boat to find you dead or alive, and secure evidence if possible to set Mason Bond free."

"What!" exclaimed the astonished detective. "You came here for

that purpose?"
"I did."

"But-what a working of fate! Hurrah! We are rescued, Dane! We shall be taken off this accursed atoll!"

The other man, sallow and careworn, only smiled and said:

"It is for me only from one prison to another."

When Frank told the detective that he had Howell Bond aboard the

submarine boat, Denton the detective was in high feather.

"Bring your boat out of the labyrinth, Mr. Reade!" he cried.

"I am all ready and eager to get back to America. Justice is done at

CHAPTER XI.

THE DIVERS' SEARCH.

- "I WISH I could be sure of getting my boat out of the labyrinth safely," said Frank.
 "Is there any doubt of it?" asked the detective, in consternation.

"Indeed, much doubt of it.

"Indeed, much doubt of it."
"That is too bad! Ships do not seem to pass this way very often. But we will not give up hope!"
"No, indeed!" cried Frank. "I am going back now to blow my way up here with dynamite."
"Whew!" exclaimed Denton, "will that not be risky?"
"Possibly, but the case calls for desperate measures. Come on, Jack! Now, gentlemen, we will say au revoir. When we come back we will show you the submarine boat."
"We will live in that anticipation," cried the detective.
Frank and Grogan put on their helmets and waded into the water.

Frank and Grogan put on their helmets and waded into the water. They were soon under the surface.

Down the sandy slopes they went. Not until they had traveled

some distance did a startling fear come to Frank.

"Confound it!" he cried.

"What is the matter, mate?" asked the sailor.

"Now we are in a scrape!"
"Eh? How so?"

"Can we find the entrance by which we emerged? I have not the slightest idea where it is."

Here was a problem at once. They saw their mistake in not having marked the course.
"Well, I'll be keel-hauled," ejaculated Grogan. "I never thought

of losing it. What can we do, skipper?"

Frank was willing to admit that he did not know.

"On my word," he muttered. "I am in a quandary. I see nothing here which looks familiar."

Both men were puzzled. They wandered on for hours over the sands without finding the entrance to the labyrinth.

This was an appalling situation. Suppose they could not find their way back to the submarine boat er? What would be the fate of Bond, Barney and Pomp?

The horrible reflection was more than Frank could bear. sued the quest until so exhausted that he finally sank down over-

"My soul!" he cried, "this is the most fatal move we have yet ade. What can we do? Oh, we must find our way back somemade. how!"

"That does not look possible, mate," declared the old salt. "It's like looking for a bubble in the ocean!"

However, they wandered on again until suddenly they found them-selves above the surface again.

It was night and the starry canopy above twinkled merrily. Both

men were utterly exhausted. It was impossible for them to travel further without rest. So they

crawled up on the sandy beach and went to sleep.

When they awoke it was nearly noon. They at once put on their

helmets and slid back into the lagoon. But just as they did so a dull, muffled roar was heard, and a vibratthe earth like a veritable earthquake.

"What is that?" exclaimed Frank
"I reckon it's some kind of an earthquake, messmate," answered
Grogan. "Move lively now if ye're goin' with me."
Down into the deep water they slid and the search went on.

Had the two divers at that moment known the real cause of that muffied shock they would have been surprised and perhaps have changed their tactics somewhat.

As it was they continued to search the bed of the lagoon for the entrance to the labyrinth.

And it was more by accident that they finally found it. Grogan chanced to look up and saw a rocky roof over them.

He clutched Frank's arm at once, and placing his helmet against

Frank's shouted:

"Ahoy, mate! We've found it at last."

"Eh?" exclaimed Frank, looking up. "By Jove, you're right,
Grogan!"

It is hardly necessary to say that the two divers were glad. They hastened on, and soon things began to look familiar to them.
They soon reached the crevice and passed through it.

They were in the main chamber of the labyrinth at last. But where was the Red Fin?

It was not in sight.

For a moment Frank was inclined to a belief that they had lost their way, and were in another part of the labyrinth.

But after some search he found the print of the boat's keel in the

This settled all doubt.

But where was the Fin?
There could be but one hypothesis. The three voyagers, Bond and Barney and Pomp, had given them up for lost, and had gone off on

They were doubtless ere this deep in the heart of the labyrinth again.

Frank saw the fatality of such a move, and his heart sank like

"My soul!" he groaned; "they are lost! We can never hope to find them or recall them. What a fatal move for them to make!"

"Eels and salamanders!" ejaculated Grogan, "that beats anything

I ever heard of! Why, mate, they'll never get out of here alive!"
"No!" groaned Frank in dismay. "What folly for them to leave this spot!"

For somewhile, overwhelmed with the force of the whole thing, the

two men sat hopelessly down in the sand.

But the more Frank pondered upon the subject the better satisfied he became that the luckless Red Fin and its voyagers were lost.

In this case, they might as well return to the atoll and trust in some chance of their getting out of the labyrinth. Certainly he and Grogan

could do no good by remaining here.

To attempt to pursue the boat through the labyrinth was wholly impracticable. So Frank arose and said:

"Come, Jack, let us go back."

"Ay—ay, skipper," replied the old salt, "it's an unlucky cruise, eh?"

"Yes," replied Frank. "very unfortunate."

They turned back into the crevice, and this time, as chance had it, they turned to the left instead of to the right. This brought them into the passage explored by Bond and Barney, and which led to the brow of the precipice.

They proceeded slowly, and it was the merest chance which enabled Frank to see the chasm just in time to avoid falling into it.

He clutched Grogan's arm.
"Egad! Look out, Jack!" he cried. "What is this? Where are

The two divers stood aghast at the sight of the chasm. What did

The two divers stood agnast at the sight of the chasm. What did it mean? This had not been in their path before. Had the earthquake opened it in their absence? But reflection showed the impossibility of this.

"Sculpins an' sunfish!" ejaculated the old sailor, "if we'd walked off there, mate, it would have been the end of us."

"Indeed it would," agreed Frank, "but I do not remember this chasm. We must be in the wrong passage."

The two divers were engrossed with one horrible thought at that moment.

moment. What if they had lost their way again in this horrible labyrinth?

What if they never regained it?

Must they meet such an awful ead? For death would come sooner or later to seal their fate.

Instinctively they grasped hands.

"Easy Jack," said Frank, somewhat in a quiver; "we must find our way out of here. Let us be very careful in retracing our steps."

Frank looked for their footprints as well as he could, and in this manner they made their way back to the mouth of the crevice.

Here they discovered the cause of their mistake.

The two passages converging from the right and the left were carefully located. This time they took the opposite passage.

Proceeding with great caution they were soon once again in the bed of the lagoon. It was with a sense of relief that they felt themselves approaching the beach of the atoll once more.

They came out of the water to find all sunlight about them.

It was very near the spot where they had first appeared and Frank was not surprised to see two men running along the beach towards them and hear voices hailing them.

The two men were Denton the detective, and Dane the forger.

As they came up they were full of caren quesies.

As they came up they were full of eager queries. But to all Frank could only shake his head, and say:

"I am very sorry. We have been unsuccessful."
"What?" exclaimed Denton. "You don't mean to say that you could not find your submarine boat?"

Frank inclined his head,
"But how do you account for that?"
"I am unable to," said Frank, "save upon the premise that they
got tired waiting for us and went off on their own hook."

Denton was astounded.

"I don't see why they should do that," he cried; "aren't your men supposed to obey orders?"

"Well," said Frank, "they may have been justified. Perhaps they made search for us, and finding as they believed that we were lost beyond recall, they had given us up entirely."

"That is unfortunate!" said the detective with bitter disappointment. "Well, it makes castaways of us all upon this lonely isle!"

"That is true!" agreed Frank.

"And what is worse, the prospect for getting taken off by a passing vessel is not of the brightest?"

Old Jack Grogan had been strolling along the sands while this conversation was going on.

He suddenly pansed and began to inspect an object in the sand.

Then be turned and motioned to the others.
"Come here, mates!" he cried.
"What have you found, Jack?" cried Frank.
"Come here an' I'll show ye."

All flocked to the spot. There deep in the yielding sand were enormous footprints.

They were those of a human being, a bare foot of enormous size. A

peculiar mark lay alongside the big toe.

"That mark," said Grogan, "is made by a ring worn in the toe.
There's no use trying to fool ourselves, mates. There's cannibals about here.

" Cannibals?" ejaculated Denton, while all looked aghast.

" Just so!"

"Not the real article?"

"Yes, the real article," affirmed the old sailor. "I knows 'em from A to Z, for I came nigh being flayed alive by 'em onct. Keep yer weather eye open."
"Well," said Frank, "this adds a new feature to the outlook. We

are not well armed to meet a gang of man-eaters.

"Well, you bet not," declared Jack, earnestly; "it would be a sick and sorry time fer us. These islanders are bad, fer they carry poisoned darts."

Denton gave a wild cry of terror and his face turned chalky white. He pointed to a distant headland in the lagoon.

All looked in that direction and beheld a thrilling spectacle.

Around the headland there was being propelled a long war canoe. In it were fully a score of native islanders.

CHAPTER XII.

EXCITING ADVENTURES-THE END.

"THE cannibals are coming!" yelled Denton. "Get under cover,

All instantly sprung into the shade of the palm trees. They felt re-

lieved when certain that they had not been seen.

But the war cance was coming straight for the spot where they What should they do?

This was the question which passed from lip to lip.

For a few moments all were in a quandary. Dane had thought of starting across the arm of the atoll and seeking safety on the other

But Frank said:

"We will gain nothing by retreat. Let us remain right here in the cover of this thicket. It is possible that they will pass right by us, and we shall not be in half so much danger of discovery."

"Right!" cried Denton. "We will adopt your move, Mr. Reade."

"So all expected down in the cover or the dwarf palms. Meanwhile

So all crouched down in the cover or the dwarf palms. the cannibals had set up a queer, chanting song to the motion of their paddles.

Across the lagoon they came rapidly and toward the very spot where our adveneurers were crouching. This seemed a very queer coincidence.

On came the war canoe until right in the surf. Then it was run up onto the sands and the occupants leaped out.

Powerful savages they were, with immense muscles and breadth of chests. They pulled the canoe far up on the sands and then took from it a species of large turtle, yet alive.

Several of the savages collected sticks and leaves and made a fire

in the sands.

"By the hornspoon!" said Denton, "they mean to stay here, don't

they?' "Probably they have come ashore to cook the turtle," suggested

"You are right. But how they'd like to spit one of us over that fire!" None in the party now thought of retreat. Breathless with interest

they watched the natives.

In a few moments they had turned the turtle over into the fire and were cooking it alive in its own shell.

This was no unusual procedure, it being the usual way of cooking turtle. But the queer actions of the natives, their speech and outlandish appearance were matters of interest to our voyagers.

While the turtle was cooking, they suddenly joined hands and began an outlandish dance about the fire.

outlandish dance about the nre.

All the while a strange and some discordant chant was kept up.

All the fish was cooked. Then This was indulged in at intervals, until the fish was cooked. down they squatted about the fire and the meal was begun.

With their shell knives they dug out the interior of the turtle shell. There seemed to be no part of the meat, intestines and all, but what

was considered fit food.

In an incredible short space nothing was left of the turtle but its shell and a few minor bones.

Then they arose, patted their stomachs in a satisfied manner, and indulged in another dance.

Then the older members of the party stretched themselves out in the sand for an after dinner nap. The others started on a tour of exploration along the shore.

Luckily none went in the direction of the hiding place of the cast-

aways; so our adventurers kept low.

"Now comes the rub," whispered Denton. "If they don't see us they will probably go away just as they came."

"I hope that will come true," said Frank.

But at this moment a chill of horror struck our friends.

A loud, blood curdling yell went up from the exploring blacks.

They had discovered something in the sands.

"Our tracks!" ejaculated Frank.
"We are lost!"

" Let us hoof out of this!"

"Look out for the poisoned darts!"
But for the cool head of Frank Reade, Jr., a panic would have en-

That they were discovered there was no doubt.

But Frank put up his hand.
"Hold on!" he said in a hoarse whisper. "They may not track

"Hold on!" he said in a hoarse whisper. "They may not track us here. At best we had better wait and see what they do."
"But will it not be too late then?" asked Denton.
"It will be too late anyway," said Frank. "We cannot hope to escape them upon the limited confines of this little atoll."
"Right, shipmates!" said Grogan. "I'll stand by the skipper!"
"All right!" agreed Denton. "I am willing!"

As for Dane he had no other choice. The blacks were much excit-

They examined the footprints and indulged in all kinds of fantastic action and wild talk.

"Oh, I wish I had a gun," said Denton, "how I'd like to scatter that crowd of carrion birds."

"Our weapons of defense are rather limited," said Frank.
"You're right. What on earth could we use? Only clubs and their ison darts—"

"Don't ye fear them," said Grogan, "they'll never use 'em on us, for they won't want to spile our meat. With poison in our blood we'd not be very good eating."

It was plain that the savages were elated with the discovery that

there were white men on the island. Their province now was to effect their capture.

They indulged in a long wrangle and once came to blows. But the controversy was finally settled and then work begun. Two of them begun to follow the trail.

Of course it could lead only to the thicket where our friends were concealed.

Matters looked squally.

Frank and his companions braced themselves for the struggle which they knew was to come. The odds were vastly against them.

But they were resolved to sell their lives as dearly as possible. There was no other course.

Straight toward their hiding place came the two dark skinned sleuth hounds. But as they reached the verge of the palm thicket

a great outcry arose.

There was a tremendous commotion in the placid waters of the lagoon. Up from its depths there had sprung a monster form.

But it was not a whale or other sea monster as might have been at first supposed. It was—the submarine boat.
"The Red Fin!" gasped Frank. "Jack, look. Can we be dream-

ing?"
"Great sculpins!" exclaimed Jack; "it is the Red Fin."

The effect of the appearance of the submarine boat upon the cannibals was most startling.

They seemed to have no further thought of the trail on the beach. They gave out loud, excited cries, and made quick action.

In a twinkling the war canoe was in the surf, and they were paddling toward the submarine boat. That they intended to attack it was seen.

This was enough for our adventurers.

They leaped out of their thicket and ran wildly down to the surfline shouting and waving their arms to attract the attention of those aboard the Red Fin if possible.

Of course they succeeded.

on the shore.

The astonishment of Bond and Barney and Pomp can hardly be im-

After waiting what seemed an interminable time in the labyrinth, Barney finally yielded to Bond's arguments and decided to go to the surface by means of the passage which they had blown out through

"We can return at any time if you desire," said Bond, "though I don't believe Frank and Grogan will ever come back here."

Yet, if the Red Fin ad been on that spot but a few moments after their first trip through the exploded passage way, they would have surely seen Frank and Grogan for they were absent at just that time.

However, fate was kindly bringing everything around all right. When they therefore came to the surface upon the waters of the

atoll lagoon, words can hardly express their amazement.
"Great Jericho!" gasped Bond. "We muss lave been traveling under this island all the while."

But a loud shout from Barney drew his attention to the cannibals

It was seen that they were coming out to attack the Red Fin. "Cannibals, as I live!" cried Bond. "And they're after us. Well,

perhaps we'll not give them a hot reception."

"Bejabers, we will!" cried Barney, as he and Pomp grasped their " bad cess to thim!"

But it was at this moment that the four castaways appeared on the beach.

"Why," shouted Bond, "there are white men on the shore there!

By ginger! I believe there are Frank and Grogan."

"Marse Frank!" screamed Pomp, wildly. "It am him! Fo' de lan's sake ain't dat good! I done tole yo' he turn up all right."

"Begorra, it's that same!" yelled Barney. "See, they're wavin' their hands to us!"

"We must reply," cried Bond, as he threw open the door and stepped out on deck

He returned the signals of those on shore, and narrowly escaped the darts of the cannibals.

Then he dodged back into the cabin.

Then he dodged back into the cabin.

The Red Fin's boat would have been got out at once, but the cannibals were coming to the attack.

They must be disposed of first.

"Give them a lesson!" cried Bond. "It is no crime to wipe out the whole parcel of them!"

"Begorra, that's roight," cried Barney, "and here goes!"

With which he instantly opened fire on the natives. For a moment or two the Winchesters were worked for all they were worth.

The cannibals were stricken down until not more than half their

The cannibals were stricken down until not more than half their number remained.

These wisely took to flight. The war canoe fled behind the cover of the headland.

Then Barney and Pomp got out the boat and rowed ashore. As they

leaped out on the sands a general embrace followed.

Then all came off to to the Red Fin. The meeting between Denton and Bond was a hearty one.

Howell even greeted Dane, who said:

"I am going home to exonerate your father, sir. I shall trust for your forgiveness."

"You have it, sir," said Howell, generously, "wholly and will-

Then of course there followed an interchange of experiences. This was interesting to all.

The remainder of that day and night the Red Fin lay in the lagoon. Then Frank said:

"I suppose all have had enough of submarine exploration for awhile?"

"I have!" cried Howell. "If I could only reach some seaport I would not trouble you further, Mr. Reade,"
"Pshaw!" said Frank. "I am going to take you right home to America. I have finished my cruise."

"It has been a wonderful one."
"Indeed yes, and thrilling as well. That experience in the coral labyrinth we shall none of us forget." "You are right."

So the next day the Red Fin crossed the reef out of the lagoon and

stood out to sea. She followed the paralled to Santiago. There a short stay was

ade. Then the journey around the Horn was once more begun.
Tempestuous seas were met, and at all times it was necessary to

sail under water. But the voyage proved successful for all that.

A short stop was made at Rio and at Trinidad. Then a clear run was made to New York.

Once inside of Sandy Hook, all on board turned out in holiday attire. The deck was polished, flags displayed, and the Red Fin went into port with due pomp and ceremony.

Leaving Howell, Denton and Dane here, Frank returned to Readestown with the Fin. And thus ended the deep sea cruise.

The confession of Dane, of course, cleared Mason Bond, and he was

once more a free man.

But Howell attributed all to Frank Reade, Jr., and the Red Fin. To this day he narrates the wonderful experiences in the coral labyrinth with a thrill of pardonable pride for his own courage.

Barney and Pomp are yet at their duties in Readestown. Frank Reade, Jr., is engaged upon a new invention, and with this announcement, dear reader, let us write

[THE END.]

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